

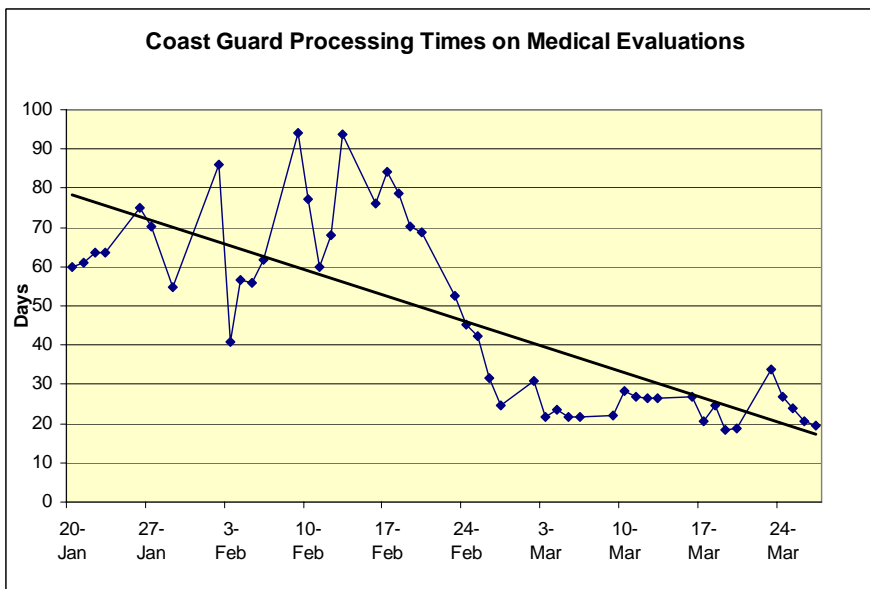


April 08, 2009

## Medical Evaluation Processing Time – A Measured Success

Since January 1, 2009, the National Maritime Center (NMC) has issued 22,158 credentials with 50% of those credentials issued in less than 32 calendar days. Since the previous quarter (10/01/08 – 12/31/08) the NMC's total average processing time for *all* credentials decreased 13% from 41 calendar days to 36 calendar days.

The NMC announced in February an aggressive plan to attack the excessive medical evaluation processing time by employing revised risk-based process changes and acquiring additional medical resources. This additional staff, which increased our existing medical staff by 63%, comprised of Coast Guard & Public Health Service active duty medical doctors and physician assistants, in addition to medically trained Coast Guard Auxiliary members.



This figure illustrates the average NMC processing time for the medical evaluation portion of our overall credentialing process. As a direct result of our risk-based process and staffing initiatives, NMC's average processing time for all medical evaluations was reduced by 67% to 19 calendar days.

The NMC will continue to look for and employ further process refinements and move swiftly to

acquire additional permanent medical resources. The Coast Guard's responsibility to ensure merchant mariners are physically and medically qualified is a critically important part of the overall evaluation process. Along those same lines, it is our responsibility to ensure that merchant mariner applicants who require medical evaluation as processed as consistently and efficiently as possible.

We truly thank you for your support and patience as the Coast Guard continues to improve the Merchant Mariner Credentialing program. As always, we welcome your comments and suggestions for further improvement.

Sincerely,

David C. Stalfort  
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard  
Commanding Officer